



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

May 24, 2010

To: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

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REPORT ON THE IMPACT OF CONSOLIDATING THE ANTELOPE VALLEY REHABILITATION CENTERS

On April 20, 2010, during your Board's discussion, Supervisor Antonovich requested this Office to provide an administrative memo on the impact of consolidating the Antelope Valley Rehabilitation Centers (AVRC) at the Acton facility; and the feasibility of pursuing research funding from private sources, such as alcohol or beverage industries, for the facility.

AVRC - CONSOLIDATION IMPACT

The Department of Public Health's (DPH) Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC) operates the AVRC, which consists of two rehabilitation campuses: Acton and Warm Springs. As an efficiency measure and to avoid substantial capital needs at both facilities, DPH proposed to consolidate the two facilities at the Acton center. Both AVRC facilities are in need of major repairs and received Notice of Violations from the California Regional Water Quality Board. Our Office concurs with DPH that it is not cost effective to renovate both facilities to meet the State and County health and safety standards.

On April 6, 2010, DPH reported in a memo to your Board that it would retain its current level of funding and staffing after consolidating its two facilities. Since the issuance of DPH's memo, our Office has identified a savings of \$1.7 million in other County departmental costs and reflected the savings in our recommendations to your Board in the 2010-11 Proposed Budget.

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The current census of both campuses ranges from 300 to 310. During the construction phases of the consolidation, AVRC anticipates the need to temporarily reduce census to 240 as residential units and office space for staff are renovated. Acton's final total client population after the consolidation is anticipated to be 309.

POTENTIAL FUNDING FROM PRIVATE SOURCES

DPH strives to implement evidence-based research to guide its programs and services to ensure the best use of resources and the highest level of services for Los Angeles residents. This is especially true in the area of substance abuse and dependence and the services provided at the AVRC.

While SAPC and its providers have been involved in a number of research-related activities to improve practices and outcomes, it has not pursued research funding from any industry, including the alcohol industry. DPH advises that if it were to solicit funding from private sources to support research, specifically the alcohol industry, a few considerations would need to be made. In order for the research to be accepted as scientifically valid, it must be conducted without any conflict of interest on the part of the funders or any other external party participating in the study. Additionally, solicitation of alcohol industry support for research on treatment of alcohol dependence will also likely engender debate over whether or not researchers who receive such funding are unbiased.

DPH indicates that among the substance abuse prevention community in the County there is opposition to this topic. Reasons for the opposition include the same concerns described above on conflict of interest and the compromising of scientific ethics. Opposition would also be anticipated should the County accept funds from outside sources with the intent to maintain the AVRCs. While the AVRCs are the County's residential treatment facilities, they are only two among hundreds of substance use treatment programs in Los Angeles County that arguably should also benefit from any outside funding received by the County.

DPH knows of no other governmental agencies that receive funding from the alcohol or other industries to conduct research on treatment of substance use disorders. Based on these and the reasons mentioned above, DPH does not recommend approaching the alcohol industry to request funding for research.

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If you have any questions or need additional information on this matter, please contact me or your staff may contact Sheila Shima, Deputy Chief Executive Officer at (213) 974-1160 or sshima@ceo.lacounty.gov.

WTF:BC:SAS
MLM:TOF:bjs

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Public Health

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